

Application No.: 9/425,636

Case No.: 55197US002

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CENTRAL FAX CENTER****OCT 29 2003****Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**OFFICIAL****Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method of delivering and releasing active material comprising the steps of:

- a) providing hydrogel microbeads each comprising a plurality of active material droplets entrained within a hydrophilic matrix ~~that is cured non-chemically at temperatures in the range of about 10°C to about 40°C or that is cured chemically~~, said microbeads having an average diameter between about 1  $\mu\text{m}$  to about 1000  $\mu\text{m}$ ;
- b) creating a suspension of a plurality of said microbeads;
- c) delivering said suspension comprising said microbeads onto an intended environment; and
- d) allowing said microbeads to dehydrate.

Claim 2 (Original): The method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- e) exposing said microbeads to humidity; and
- f) allowing said microbeads to rehydrate.

Claim 3 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said active material is a pheromone and said hydrophilic matrix is an alginate.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 2 wherein said step of exposing said microbeads to humidity is performed by wetting the surfaces of said microbeads with water.

Claim 5 (Original): The method according to claim 2 wherein said step of exposing said microbeads to humidity is performed by adding moisture to the ambient air.

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Claim 6 (Original): The method according to claim 2 wherein said steps d) thru f) are repeated sequentially.

Claim 7 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic matrix is made from a polysaccharide.

Claim 8 (Original): The method according to claim 7 wherein said polysaccharide is selected from the group consisting of alginate, chitosans, carrageenan, gum and agar.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic matrix is a material selected from the group consisting of polyvinyl alcohol, poly(N-isopropylacrylamide), acrylamides, acrylates, methacrylates, and combinations thereof.

Claim 10 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said active material is selected from the group consisting of pheromone, mercaptan-containing compound, herbicide, pesticide, and pharmaceutical material.

Claim 11 (Canceled)

Claim 12 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said microbead has an average diameter between about 1  $\mu\text{m}$  to about 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 13 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said microbead further comprises a surfactant.

Claim 14 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said microbead further comprises an oil absorbent.

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Claim 15 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein said microbeads further comprise an additive selected from the group consisting of preservatives, humectants, stabilizers, UV protectants, and combinations thereof.

Claim 16 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said active material is present in an amount between about 0.1 wt % to about 60 wt% of the total weight of said microbead.

Claim 17 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said active material is present in an amount between about 0.2 wt% to about 40 wt % of the total weight of said microbead.

Claim 18 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said active material is present in an amount between about 0.3 wt% to about 20 wt % of the total weight of said microbead.

Claims 19-32 (Canceled)